

SENATE BILL 2045

By Ford

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4;  
Title 8 and Title 49, relative to civil rights  
education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 10, is amended by  
adding the following as a new section:

49-6-1030.

(a) Understanding the important role the civil rights movement had on the  
state of Tennessee and understanding the importance of teaching Tennessee's  
children all of our history, it is the goal of this general assembly to provide  
meaningful support to this most important endeavor. Tennessee's central role in  
the civil rights struggle needs to be formalized and taught as a beacon of hope  
for all of our citizens.

(b) The state board of education may make civil rights and human rights  
education a part of the K-12 curriculum of instruction in Tennessee public  
schools. The department of education shall work with the Tennessee civil rights  
education commission established in subsection (c) in implementing these five  
(5) guidelines:

(1) Provide assistance and advice to K-12 schools with respect to  
the civil rights movement and human rights education and awareness  
programs;

(2) Survey and catalog the extent to which civil rights and human  
rights education exists in state curricula;

(3) Inventory civil rights memorials, exhibits and resources that could be used in classrooms and other educational programs;

(4) Compile a list of volunteers who are willing to share their knowledge and experiences concerning the struggle for civil rights;

(5) Prepare reports for the governor and the general assembly on the inclusion of civil rights studies into the educational systems of the state.

(c)

(1) There is created the Tennessee civil rights education commission. The commission shall be assigned to the office of the secretary of state for administrative purposes only. The commission shall provide or assist education officials and other organizations with information, coordination and modification of courses or programs that include the civil rights movement, and will carry out the specific responsibilities set forth in subsection (b). In completing this task, the commission may act as a liaison with various bodies, including the United States Congress, the general assembly, as well as other national and international agencies. The commission shall consist of no more than fifteen (15) members, eleven (11) positions of which will be voluntary, to serve with a term of three (3) years on a rotating basis. These positions will be filled by application submitted to the commissioner of education with appointment to be made by the commissioner of education.

(2) The members of the commission shall be residents of this state and shall be appointed with due regard for broad geographic representation.

(3) The commission shall have a chairperson who shall be designated by the commissioner of education from the commission membership for a term of four (4) years and eight (8) members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the commission.

(4) The Tennessee commission on civil rights education shall adopt rules and regulations and set standards and policies for the organization, operation, management, budgeting and programs of the commission.

(5) The commission may apply for and receive gifts, grants and donations from any public or private sources, including federal and private foundation grants. Members of the commission may not be compensated for the performance of their duties except from nonstate funds that are specifically available therefor.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 4-29-234(a), is amended by adding the following as a new subdivision:

( ) Tennessee commission on civil rights education, created by § 49-6-1030;

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011, the public welfare requiring it.